

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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-----181745Z 125426 /43

O 181627Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 550
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02LAGOS 4294

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, RH, WA, CG, AO, NI, UK
SUBJECT: OWEN'S MEETING WITH GARBA APRIL 17

REF: LAGOS 4245

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN'S TALKS WITH EXTAFF COMMISS
IONER GARBA APRIL 17 WENT WELL. OWEN PRESENTED HIS PROPOSALS FOR
PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO RHODESIAN ISSUE, AND ALTHOUGH GARBA WAS
SKEPTICAL HE INTERPOSED NO OBJECTION TO UK EFFORT. OWEN
DISCUSSED 5 POWER STANCE ON NAMIBIA AT SOME LENGTH. AS REQUESTED
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BY BY SECRETARY OWEN RAISED ZAIRE-ANGOLA.
GARBA SAID NETO HAD CLEARLY "CONNIVED" AT THE KATANGESE INVASION,
UT HE DID NOT THINK NETO WANTED A FULL SCALE. WAR. GARBA
EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER FRENCH ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE, WHICH HE WAS
SURPRISED HAD PROVOKED NO SOVIET RESPONSE. ON THE OTHER HAND
HE DEFENDED ZAIRE'S RIGHT TO ASK FOR ASSISTANCE AFD OBSERVED
MOROCCAN TROOPS HAD APPARENTLY STABILIZED THE SITUATION. GARBA

SAID HE INTENDED TO CONTINUE HIS MEDIATION EFFORT BUT DID NOT SAY WHEN. WE MAY HAVE FURTHER READING ON THIS WHEN UK REPRESENTATIVE GEORGE THOMPSON COMES APRIL 20 TO CONSULT WITH FMG REF JUNE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. UK HICOMER SIR SAM FALLE BRIEFED FRENCH AMBASSADOR, CANADIAN HICOMER, GERMAN CHARE'S AND US/DCM APRIL 18 ON OWEN MEETING WITH GARBA APRIL 17. GARBA HAD RECEIVED OWEN AT AIRPORT 1:45 P.M., CONFERRED WITH HIM AT MIN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS FROM 3 TO ALMOST 5, AND SEEN HIM OFF AT ABOUT MIDNIGHT. TALKS WENT WELL EXCEPT FOR GARBA OUTBURST AGAINST BBC TV DOCUMENTARY ON OJKWU AND GOWON. CONVERSATION RANGED OVER RHODESIA CONFERENCE EFFORT, PRESSURES ON VORSTER RE NAMIBIA, AND THE ZAIRE-ANGOLA PROBLEM.

(A) OWEN HAD MADE FULL PITCH TO GARBA ON RHODESIA, AS REPORTED PREVIOUSLY FROM OTHER CAPITALS. SAID HE HAD HAD 5 HOURS WITH IAN SMITH, WHOM HE HAD FOUND TO BE TOUGH, WORRIED BUT NOT INCLINED TO GIVE UP. OWEN SAID SANCTIONS ARE FINALLY BEGINNING TO MAKE SMITH'S SITUATION DIFFICULT, AND US REPEAL OF BYRD AMENDMENT HAS BEEN OF CONSIDERABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPORTNACE. GARBA WAS SKEPTICAL AS TO SMITH'S SINCERITY AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MAKING GENUINE PROGRESS WITH HIM. OWEN SAID HE SAW NO OTHER PERSON CAPABLE OF TAKING OVER AND CONSIDERED THE CONFERENCE EFFORT WAS WORTH THE GAMBLE. HE WAS NOT ASKING FOR CESSATION OF ARMED STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, SO NOTHING WOULD BE LOST BY LIBERATION FIGHTERS IF SMITH COULD NOT BE BROUGHT AROUND. OWEN SAID THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS HAD AGREED WITH THIS. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT ALLOW SMITH A VETO POWER OVER THE CONFERENCE, AND IF SMITH RENEGED, HE WOULD BE INCLINED TO HOLD THE CONFERENCE ANYWAY. PROBLEM THERE WILL BE TO GET CONFIDENTIAL

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AFRICANS TO AGREE THAT ALL LIBERATION ELEMENTS SHOULD BE REPRESENTED.(NO PROBLEM WITH GARBA ON THIS.) HICOMER FALLE CONCLUDED WITH OBSERVATION THAT OWEN WAS ESSENTIALLY APPEALING FOR A BEN EVOLENT NIGERIAN ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EFFORT TO GET A RHODESIA CONFERENCE ON THE RAILS. OWEN WAS AFRAID THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS MIGHT BE UNNECESSARILY TOUGH IN THEIR STANCESTOWARD NEGOTIATIONS AND HE HOPED NIGERIA WOULD NOT ENCOURAGE THEM IN THIS. GARBA REMAINED SKEPTICAL BUT WILLING TO SEE UK GO AHEAD WITH ITS ATTEMPT AT A CONFERENCE. SIR SAM'S FINAL OBSERVATION ABOUT RHODESIA WAS THAT CHIEF ADEBO, FORMER NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UN, HAD TOLD OWEN LAST NIGHT THAT IF THE RHODESIA ISSUE IS SETTLED BYFORCE, SIMBABWE WILL EMERGE WITH A COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT AND THIS NIGERIA DOES NOT WANT.

(B) REGARDING NAMIBIA, OWEN HAD DISCUSSED THE 5 POWER POSITION AT SOME LENGTH. GARBA HAD BEEN GRATEFUL FOR THE EXPOSTION BUT WAS SKEPTICAL AS TO THE PROSPECTS OF BRINGING VORSTER AROUND.(IN VIEW OF THIS EXTENSIVE ORAL PRESENTATION BY OWEN, THE FRENCH, GERMAN AND CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVES CONCLUDED

THEY WOULD MAKE NOR ORAL DEMARCHE BUT MIGHT INDIVIDUALLY SEND NOTES TO MEA FOR THE RECORD.)
(C) RE ZAIRE-ANGOLA, OWEN HAD APPARENTLY NOT DISCUSSED THIS WITH NETO, CONFINING HIMSELF INSTEAD LARGELY TO ZIMBABWE.
(INCIDENTALLY, OWEN HAD RECEIVED A MORE FAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF NETO THAN HE HAD EXPECTED.) AS SECRETARY VANCE HAD REQUESTED, OWEN BROUGHT UP ZAIRE-ANGOLA WITH GARBA TO SEEK HIS VIEWS. GARBA'S RESPONSE WAS EQUIVOCAL IN SOME RESPECTS. HE SAID NETO HAD CLEARLY "CONNIVED" AT THE KATANGESE INVASION OF SHABA AND HAD GIVEN THEM ASSISTANCE, ALTHOUGH NOT MAJOR ASSISTANCE. GARBA OPINED NETO MAY HAVE WANTED TO TAKE PREEMPTIVE ACTION AGAINST POSSIBLE ATTACK FROM ZAIRE BUT DID NOT WANT A FULL SCALE WAR. NIGERIA DOES NOT WANT TO SEE THE ZAIRE STRUGGLE INTERNATIONALIZED; GARBA EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER FRENCH

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-----181746Z 125635 /43

O 181627Z APR 77
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02LAGOS 4294

EXDIS

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

SUPPORT FOR ZAIRE AND SAID HE WAS SURPRISED THERE HAD BEEN
NO REACTION FROM THE SOVIET UNION OR CUBA, WHOM ANGOLA MIGHT

HAVE ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE IN TURN. OWEN AGREED THE INTRODUCTION OF OUTSIDE FORCES SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED. SAT THAT POINT, HOWEVER, GARBA APPEARED TO SHIFT HIS GROUND AND OBSERVED THAT AN INDEPENDENT STATE HAS THE RIGHT TO ASK FOR ANY HELP IT FEELS IT NEEDS TO DEFEND ITS TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. GARBA OBSERVED THAT THE ZAIRE SITUATION HAD BEEN STABILIZED BY MORCCAN TROOPS AND INDICATED THAT NIGERIA WOULD WAIT TO SEE HOW THE MATTER EVOLVED. IN RESPONSE TO OWEN'S EXPRESSED HOPE THAT NIGERIA WOULD GET ON VIGOROUSLY WITH

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MEDIATION EFFORT, GARBA ASSERTED HE DOES PLAN TO CONTINUE, BUT HE DID NOT INDICATE WHAT HE INTENDS TO DO OR WHEN. HICOMER FALLE CONCLUDED WITH OBSERVATION THAT HE MIGHT GET A FURTHER READING ON THIS WHEN GEORGE THOMPSON COMES (APRIL 20-22) AS UK REPRESENTATIVE TO CONSULT WITH COMMONWEALTH MEMBERS RE THE JUNE CWTH CONFERENCE IN LONDON. SIR SAM THOMPSON ASSUMED ZAIRE-ANGOLA WOULD DISCUSS AS WELL AS IDI AMIN.

3. COMMENT. AGAIN INDICATIONS OF NIGERIAN INCLINATION TO WAIT AND SEE ON ZAIRE-ANGOLA. WE HAD THOUGHT GARBA MIGHT MAKE A QUICK RUN TO KINSHASA THIS WEEK, RETURNING IN TIME FOR A RECEPTION HE IS GIVING THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS APRIL 22, BUT GEORGE THOMPSON'S VISIT MAKES THIS DOUBTFUL. IT MAY BE THAT FMG IS WAITING FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT WHEN ZAIRE MILITARY POSITION IN SHABA IS STRENGTHENED SUFFICIENTLY TO IMPROVE CHANCES FOR SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS.

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